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ABSTRACT

The case method is a key tool that teachers can use to develop their practical knowledge and practical thinking styles in both preservice and inservice education. The case method in Japanese teacher education has been a major approach for more than 100 years. The approach to case method described here has been implemented in five settings: (1) the use of case studies in school-inhouse workshops, transforming the "theory into practice" approach into the "theory through practice" or the "practice-critique-development" approach; (2) introduction of the case method into informal study groups; (3) creation of innovative teacher inservice programs in the teacher training centers though use of the case method of instruction; (4) the use of the case method in the university preservice program; and (5) the production of case books on teaching. In the case books, the intent is to correlate the multiple interpretations of specialists with those of teachers, centering upon the practical problem-solving process in a teaching case. The case method can be a strong force that helps teachers build a professional community in Japanese schools. (IAH)

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Case Method in Japanese Teacher Education:

Traditions and Our Experiments

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1) Introduction: Case method as a tool to empower professional wisdom

In the last decade, the methodology in the empowering of teachers' practical competence has been one of the most critical issues discussed both in the United States and in Japan. Many researchers and administrators have developed a great many teacher preservice and inservice programs. However, we do not have ample information to devise better methods in improving them. Today, I would like to discuss Japanese traditions of case method in teacher education, and then, to describe our experiments of editing case books with videotapes, in order to share common interest with you.

It is well-known that the case method has been a major teaching approach in most professional schools. Since the case method was developed in the Harvard Business School more than 60 years ago, it has been used in clinical studies in medical schools, as precedent studies in law schools and so on. Today, most professional educators recognize that the case method makes it possible to empower professional wisdom by relating theoretical knowledge to practical problem solving in real situations.

Likewise, if we regard the teacher as a professional, we must attach great importance to the case method in teacher education. At this point, many questions must be examined. What kind of case method might be possible in teacher education ? What knowledge could be valid in teaching cases ? How

can we use case method in teacher education ? More fundamental problems must be solved. Do we retain the solid knowledge-base enough to establish teachers' professionalism, or not ? What is more, if we are wise enough to deeply comprehend that teaching is an uncertain adventure in a complicated situation, on what grounds can we assert that the case method is effective for teachers ?

In the second conference of JUSTEC at Honolulu, I characterized teachers' practical knowledge as displaying the following five features, 1) deliberative knowledge generated in practical argument, 2) case knowledge represented as content specific, context specific, and child specific knowledge, 3) complex knowledge correlated with various theories, 4) tacit knowledge including implicit belief, and 5) personal knowledge connected with individual experience. The next year, in the third conference at Tokyo, I presented five features of teacher's practical thinking styles based upon our empirical research on expert teachers' thought processes, that is to say, 1) impromptu thinking in action, 2) active, sensitive, and deliberative involvement in an ill-structured situation, 3) multiple view points to detect a practical problem, 4) contextualized thinking in pedagogical reasoning, and 5) problem framing and reframing strategy in reflective thinking. I believe that the case method is a keystone by which teachers can develop their practical knowledge and practical thinking styles both in preservice and in inservice education.

2) Two traditions of practical argument in Japan: Theory into practice vs. theory through practice

It might be curious for US researchers to discover that the case method in Japanese teacher education has been a major approach for more than a hundred years. In the 1870s, at the starting point of modern schooling in Japan, a US Pestalozzian teacher, McCarell M. Scott, introduced a modern teaching style into Japan. His demonstrative teaching at Tokyo Normal School was recorded and published as a case book. After that, many case books were published, and enabled teachers to imitate American teaching style. This is one of the reasons why Japanese teachers so rapidly changed their teaching from traditional style to American modern style.

In the 1890s, a German Herbartian, Dr. Emil P. H. Hausknecht, the first professor of education at the University of Tokyo, lectured on a sophisticated pedagogical theory, and introduced the programs developed at Jena University in Germany. The method spread rapidly and formed a dominant style of teaching and its reflection. In teachers preservice, after observing student teaching, supervisors of normal schools commented on it based upon the Herbartian's pedagogical principles. In teachers inservice, most schools held school-in-house case study workshops usually once a month, where teachers reflected their teaching in accord with the Herbartian's pedagogical 'formal five steps', that is to say, preparation, presentation, comparison, synthesis and adaptation. By means of the method, Japanese teachers could introduce a European teaching style into their classrooms.

Every teacher wrote teaching plans guided by the 'formal five steps', and discussed each practice based upon it. This is the primitive tradition in which Japanese teachers used the case method.

It may be interesting to know that, in the Japanese Herbartian's case method, we can find an archetype of *theory-into-practice* approach. The case study was implemented as an application of the predetermined procedural principle, the Herbartian's 'formal five steps'. Under the authorized national curriculum, and under the constraints of teacher as a national servant, Japanese pedagogues converted Herbartian's theory into a simple, formalized teaching procedure. This tradition stands in contrast with that of the US. Remember, in the 1890s and 1900s, American Herbartians and their associates, including John Dewey, developed unit teaching method to enrich their curriculum making, as a result of receiving German Hrbartian's theories. In Japan, the formalized teaching procedure stemmed from Herbartian theories, promoted the uniformity of practice and restricted teaching within a prescribed routine work.

In the 1920s, the opposite archetype of the case method, *theory-through -practice* approach, was initiated under the influence of US progressive movement. Many creative teachers in Japan wanted to change their teaching styles from teacher-centered to child-centered. They reported their innovative teaching cases in many teacher journals. Many experimental schools demonstrated progressive teaching, and held the case study workshops for teachers. Despite that, the tradition was broken off under the militarism in the 1930s, it was revitalized in the late of 1940s, in the democratic revolutionary age under the US occupation.

The progressive tradition of *theory-through-practice* approach was, however, restricted in the 1950s. Since the national curriculum was enacted in 1958, a bureaucratic system of teachers inservice has gradually dominated schools. About 200 local teacher training centers have been established for the past three decades in order to produce a high standard effect of the national curriculum. Today, each prefectural teacher training center offers nearly 1,000 inservice programs per year. Total number of the programs all the centers offer may be about 50,000 in a year.

It is an irony that, just when the bureaucratic system of teachers inservice was formed, educational researchers ventured into a new territory of scientific research on teaching. Before the 1960s, Japanese educational researchers had rarely used case study in their research on teaching. However, for the past three decades, they have published a great number of papers and books entitled, "scientific study on teaching", "science of teaching", "technology of teaching" , "general theory on teaching". They regarded teaching as a black box, so to speak, an input-output system, or a rational technical structure. They searched for the principles of technical rationality derived from process-product research on teaching, or scientific analysis of teacher-student interactions. The black box may be a good metaphor if the researchers observe teaching with blind eyes. Indeed, they gathered audiotape records of teaching, analyzed them out of classrooms, and brought the generalized principles and techniques into classrooms.

The advances in the scientific study on teaching made it possible for the Ministry of Education and the prefectural board of education to develop systematic teacher inservice programs. The scientific studies on teaching

also enabled universities to establish masters graduate courses for teachers inservice. In fact, more than 30 universities set up the graduate courses for teachers in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, the prosperity of scientific and theoretical research on teaching caused the organization of many study associations in each subject matter. These developed lots of "teacher-proof" curriculum packages and teaching principles, and spread them all over the country.

For the past three decades, the scientific and theoretical research on teaching has gradually penetrated into schools. It changed the practical arguments in schools. Teachers became to use many technical terms to describe their teaching, for example, educational objective, classroom management, teaching efficiency, teaching strategy and tactic, effective questioning skill, summative and formative evaluation, standardized achievement test scores and so on. These words stemmed mainly from behavioral science and social efficiency ideology, spread in teachers' studies on teaching.

It is also an irony that the more teachers talked about their teaching theoretically, the more their practical language became impoverished. While they learned to talk about educational objectives, teaching skills and teaching effects, they seldom talked about concrete experience and cognition of each student, content knowledge, and social and cultural context of teaching. The tendency was a matter of course. Because, the scientific and theoretical approach intended to convert the complexity of teaching into a sort of simplicity, it searched for ways to generalize the universal principles or techniques every teachers could use.

3) My experiments to develop case studies: Opening a Pandora's box

In order to rethink the case study method in teacher education, for twelve years, I have visited schools two days per week and explored the alternative approaches in teacher inservice method through using videotapes.

In 1980, I started bringing a videocamera into classrooms in order to illuminate the black box from within - - and to open a Pandora's box. Opening a Pandora's box is not a bad metaphor. As a result, I must face numerous unsolvable problems embedded in teaching, and must acknowledge teaching as an impossible profession. Nevertheless, I was able to maintain a hope to open a pathway for cultivating professional wisdom beyond a confine of technical rationality.

After opening a Pandora's box, in the first place, I could change my fundamental conception of teaching practice. Through observing thousands of classrooms and recording more than five hundred teaching cases with videocamera, I recognized teaching practice not as a black box but as a micro cosmos, in which political, social, cultural, academic, esthetic and ethic issues are intricately correlated. Next, I discovered the richness of practical language and discourse that creative teachers generate. Since then, I have gone ahead with a plan to research teacher's practical wisdom and how to empower it.

As mentioned in the Second Conference of JUSTEC at Honolulu, I

characterized the alternative method of teachers inservice as the *practice-critique-development* approach, in contrast with the *research-training- implementation* approach of the dominant style of Japanese formal teachers inservice. In the *research-training-implementation* approach, educational researchers offer theoretical knowledge and rational principles of teaching. Teacher educators transformed the knowledge and principles into techniques and skills, and transmit them to teachers. Then, teachers master them for the implementation in their classrooms. On the contrary, in the *practice-critique-development* approach, teachers report their teaching as a narrative documentation with video-record. Teachers and researchers reflect and deliberate the teaching case together, in order to generate professional wisdom.

These two approaches correspond to two different prototypes of teaching cases. In the *research-training-implementation* approach, the teaching case is regarded as an illustration by which theoretical knowledge embodied or applied in a practical situation. Here, the good case is a good example which represents a tight relationship between a general theory and prescribed practical problems.

Contrariwise, the case in the *practice-critique-development* approach, is more complicated. The facts embedded in the case are regarded as the uncertain, complex and variable events. The case is not an evidence by which a prescribed theory is justified. Rather, it is an incident with which teachers and researchers recognize the difficulty, complexity, richness and alternative possibility in teaching. Classroom is not a place where a predetermined theory or technique is implemented. Rather, it is a central

locus where a variety of theories encounter a practical problem, and then, teachers generate their own practical knowledge and wisdom.

My alternative approach to case method has been embodied as the following five modes. The first mode is the use of case studies in school-in-house-workshops. As mentioned above, most Japanese schools hold the case study workshop including observation of a classroom, usually 3 to 10 times a year in elementary schools, and 1 to 3 times in junior high schools. This is a great heritage that Japanese teachers have informally handed down for more than a hundred years. Although the school-in-house workshops have become inactive as a result of the penetration of the *theory-into-practice* approach and of recent isolation of teachers, it is still an important resource by which teachers cultivate their professional wisdom and establish collegiarity from within. I have promoted the case method in the school-in-house -workshops, transforming the *theory into practice* approach into the *theory through practice* approach.

Second, I have introduced the case method in informal study groups. The informal mutual development network of teachers has been a secret base which has guaranteed a high standard of Japanese education. However, the priority of those informal study groups has rapidly diminished under the diffusion of teacher-proof curriculum packages and teaching manuals, and under the tight schedule in schools. The case studies using videotapes enlighten teachers' eyes and revitalize the practical argument in the informal group conferences.

Third, using the case method, I have tried to create innovative teacher inservice programs in the teacher training centers. The dominant

style of teachers inservice in the centers is a transmission-lecture method. A lecturer teaches what administrators think worth while to fifty or more teachers in a class. Teachers are compelled to be obedient to the prescribed program. I have struggled in developing the clinical conference in the prefectural and local teachers centers. The *practice-critique-development* approach is effective in helping teachers become active participants, and in promoting self and mutual development. Here, the case method is a tool with which teachers recapture their professional autonomy.

Fourth, I have used the case method in the teacher preservice program at university. In Japanese teacher preservice education, the case method is rarely used. Most students complain that the knowledge and theories taught at universities are irrelevant to a real situation of teaching. The case method is a tool with which to build a bridge between seminar rooms at university and classrooms at school. What is more, it enables students to appreciate the complexity and richness which each teaching case contains.

Fifth, I have edited case books on teaching. Two types of case books have been published. The first type of case books presented teachers' practical wisdom. Superb teachers described their practice in detail, and I interpreted the meanings of the descriptions. These case books enrich teachers' practical language and discourse with which they can make stories in their classrooms. The second type of case books I edited were the documents of practical arguments in a collaboration with teachers, educational researchers and other professionals. In the arguments, after observing videotape of a teaching case and hearing the practitioner's narrative documentation, we intensively discussed main issues occurred in the prac-

tice. These case books provide teachers with an enhanced rhetoric with which they enrich the deliberation and reflection of their teaching.

4) Making professional discourse in practice: New case books we edited

Just one month ago, two case books with videotapes which I edited with Professor Inagaki and others, were published (*Case Book Series on Teaching.* Iwanami Publishers, Tokyo Japan). We have spent four years editing a series of the case books and videotapes. The editors, commentators and the titles are as follows;

<Editors and Commentators>		<Special Commentators>
Tadahiko Inagaki	(educational researcher)	+ Linguist
Junji Ishii	(teacher, supervisor)	+ Mathematician
Hayao Kawai	(clinical psychologist)	+ Historian
Masatoshi Maejima	(teacher, vice principal)	+ Scientist
Shogo Nomura	(developmental psychologist)	+ Music composer
Yutaka Saeki	(cognitive psychologist)	+ Educational researchers
Manabu Sato	(educational researcher)	in different subject matters
Toshiharu Takeuchi	(drama producer)	
Shuntaro Tanikawa	(poet)	
Hideyo Ushiyama	(teacher)	

‹Volumes and Titles› * = published.

* 1) Japanese language(1): Exploring the roots of Chinese characters

2) Japanese language(2): Teaching poetry and literature

3) Mathematics: Teaching fraction, and meaning of algebraic formula

4) Social studies: Teaching social structure and history

5) Science: Teaching electric current, and function of pollen

6) Integrated study: Nurturing goat, and creating papers

7) Physical education: Teaching Jumping and movement

8) Music: Teaching rhythm and chorus

9) Computer education: Computer as a tool of learning

*10) Special education: Beyond walls of handicap

11) Supplement: The world of teaching: In comparison with teaching in US

In the traditions of research on teaching, the content knowledge academic specialists hold, the theoretical knowledge educational researchers retain and the practical knowledge teachers generate, have seldom interacted with each other. Each type of knowledge has been separated and closed.

In the editing of the case books, we intended to correlate the multiple interpretations from specialists' view points with that of teachers, centering upon practical problem-solving process in a teaching case. The main purposes are as follows; 1) to acknowledge the complexity and richness of teaching practice through illuminating and deliberating the cultural and social meanings of an incident in the classroom, and 2) to clarify the practical problems that many teachers should share in the case, and to detect an effective strategy to resolve them.

The purposes are embodied in four components of the book. Part 1 of the book is a record of the round table case conference discussed by all the commentators and the practitioner. Part 2 is a documentation of the teaching case written by the practitioner. Part 3 is composed of several suggestions described by the commentators. Part 4 is a reflective report which the practitioner wrote after the discussion.

Please let me introduce volume 1 briefly, a case study of a lesson exploring the roots of Chinese Characters, taught by a veteran teacher, Mr.Ishii. In Part 1 = a record of round table discussion, after observing the videotape, we talked about classroom climate, environment, teacher's and students' linguistic activities and communication, teaching strategies, pedagogical content and curriculum. Many fundamental issues were examined. For example, teachers of Mr. Maejima and Mr. Ushiyama admired the flexibility in the interaction between Mr.Ishii and students. Dr. Kawai, a clinical psychologist, pointed that Mr. Ishii's impromptu decision-making made students creative, and that both the warm-hearted human relationship and its uniformity in his teaching were deeply rooted in Japanese culture. Mr. Takeuchi, a drama producer, criticized body language and linguistic activities both of Mr.Ishii and of students. Mr. Tanikawa, a famous poet who developed a distinguished textbook of Japanese Language, commented that the formal language in the classroom results in an uniformity in the classroom, and that, if Mr.Ishii's content knowledge of Chinese ancient culture was more deeply refined, students could more lively use their imagination. Dr. Saeki, a cognitive psychologist, esteemed a genetic approach of students' cognition. Dr. Inagaki, an educational researcher, discussed the structure

of teaching process and interactive thinking. I was a chairman, and referred to Japanese teachers' culture, retrospecting the collaboration with Mr. Ishii for these eight years.

In Part 2 = documentation of the lesson, Mr. Ishii described a story of developing the subject matter and his teaching practice. He attached great importance to the deliberated content knowledge and the educational imagination with which he and students could encounter the richness and complexity of ancient Chinese culture.

Part 3 = suggestions, written by the commentators, is composed of four chapters. In chapter 1, I described Mr. Ishii's personal history of innovating practice, referring to his professional growth promoted by thoughtful reflection on teaching since his starting point as a teacher. In chapter 2, Dr. Kawai described the dilemmas in teacher-student relationship in Japanese cultural context, interpreting the communication in Mr. Ishii's classroom. In chapter 3, Dr. Atuji, linguist of Chinese character, suggested that teachers should treat the roots of Chinese character as a complicated issue because of uncertainty of itself and diversity in the understandings by academic linguists. And, in chapter 4, Dr. Inagaki explained the purposes and principles of the case studies we pursued in a series of the case books.

In Part 4, Mr.Ishii reflected upon the practical argument discussed by the commentators. He reported that the discussion was a quite new, an exciting experience, through which he could encounter the richness of Japanese language, reflect his speech in the classroom and detect implicit dimension of school culture.

5) Conclusion

By opening Pandora's box, we have acknowledged that teaching is an uncertain profession, and the teacher a lonely professional. Indeed, the teacher is a lonely decision maker, because both the public and other professionals hardly understand the difficulty of teaching. Teachers must endure uneasiness stemmed from the uncertainty in a complicated situation and loneliness derived from society's lack of understanding of their profession. As a result, on one side, teachers tend to be obedient to authorized theories and predetermined tasks under the bureaucratic system. They also have a tendency to narrow their field of vision only within the prescribed objectives and activities, and to shut their classroom as a private zone.

However, on another side, teachers are able to struggle to transform the difficulty of teaching into the richness of teaching profession, through converting a predetermined routine work into a thoughtful creative adventure. Indeed, in teaching, the difficulty and the richness are the same thing, as it were the opposite sides of the same coin. Therefore, we must search for an avenue through which teachers try to think about their teaching from a different view point. The case method is a key to open Pandora's box.

As has been mentioned above, the case method we have explored is characterized as the *theory-through-practice* approach, or the *practice-critique-development* approach. The method is deeply rooted in the tradition

of progressive education movement in Japan, while the *theory-into-practice* approach or the *research-training-implementation* approach is also rooted in the tradition of bureaucratic teachers inservice. If teacher is to be regarded as an autonomous professional, we must refine the case method beyond the principles of technical rationality.

In our experiments, the case method is a tool to empower teachers' practical wisdom and professional autonomy. It offers a place where teachers share their knowledge and experience with each other, and where teachers encounter educational researchers and other professionals to collaborate with, in order to make a practical discourse. It provides teachers a cue with which to transform a variety of theories into practical wisdom through active problem solving in real situations. It can be a strong vehicle by which teachers build a professional community in Japanese schools.

Our experiments are in progress. Of course, the case method is not a magic box. Under the bureaucratic system of teachers inservice, it is hard for us to promote the case method as the *theory-through-practice* approach. However, without pushing the case method forward, Japanese teachers cannot capture a future vision to establish their professional culture beyond the confines of the teacher as public servant and of the teacher as technician.